

# NEFIRS NEWS

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Written by Lori Loyd

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## FIREWORK DISPLAYS

As some of you may know, we made some changes to the Firework Display Permit process. This year, someone who wants to have a display may apply for a permit online. However, they must still obtain the permission of the fire chief or his/her designated representative.

If a person fills out the paper application there is a place for the fire chief or his/her representative to sign. This presented a dilemma to us as we feel it is important that the local fire department approve the location and distances since you are more familiar with the area than we are.

If the person submits the application online they are saying they have received this permission and are supposed to print off a copy of the application and obtain your signature. We did some spot checking this year to make sure this had happened. Starting January 1, we are going to send a copy of the approval or denial email to fire departments if we have your email address. When you receive the email and you have no knowledge of the display, please contact us immediately so we may take appropriate action.

Please be sure to let me know if you have an email address so we can make this work and also enhance future communication with you.

## NFIRS STATISTICS AND ANALYSIS CLASS

The National Fire Academy will present a two-day class on analyzing NFIRS data and statistics on March 25-26, 2006. The course is designed for experienced NFIRS users who need enhanced fire incident analysis and reporting skills. Students will receive step-by-step instruction in Microsoft Excel, pivot table preparation, querying the NFIRS database,

and publishing pivot tables and charts on the Internet.

The class will be held at the Midtown Holiday Inn in Grand Island. A block of rooms has also been reserved. Be sure to mention you are attending this class when making room reservations.

To register go to the Training Division's website, [www.nebraskasfimt.org](http://www.nebraskasfimt.org) and click on NFA Direct Deliver Courses. The registration deadline is February 17, 2006. A \$10 registration fee must be paid to the State Fire Marshal Training Division.

## WHICH MODULE TO COMPLETE

I have been seeing an increase in the number of reports being submitted with only the Basic Module even though the incident was a grass fire or structure fire. NFIRS 5.0 is a more comprehensive reporting system than the old system. As a result more information is being collected which means there are more forms that need to be completed.

The Basic Module is **always** completed. The need to complete additional modules is based on the code you enter for the Incident Type on the Basic Module. If the incident is a structure fire (house, barn, warehouse, etc) two additional forms will need to be completed – the Fire Module and the Structure Fire Module.

The only times it is acceptable to complete only the Basic Module is for Incident Types 200 through 911 or if you give mutual aid at a fire scene (Incident Types 100-173). Departments are encouraged to complete the optional modules (EMS, Haz Mat, and Arson) but they are not required. The Wildland Module may be completed instead of the Fire Module for Incident Types 140-143, 10, 170-173.

If there are civilian casualties at a fire scene the Civilian Casualty Module must be completed. The Fire Service Casualty Module

should be completed for any fire service casualty regardless of the Incident Type.

Please be sure to complete all the appropriate modules. If you do not have all the modules, they are available on our website or by contacting me. I will return any paper reports that are incomplete or missing modules.

## CODING QUESTION

The following scenario occurred in another state but very well could have happened in Nebraska. So I'm passing the information on.

**Q:** Someone threw fireworks into a house and this was reported to the fire department as a residential structure fire. The fireworks self-extinguished and the shift personnel had only light smoke to deal with. There were 4-5 burn marks on the floor of the kitchen. On the investigation side this would be considered Arson. Should this incident be coded as a structure fire (111)? The shift personnel coded it as a Smoke Scare, Odor of smoke 651).

**A:** Actually, neither one is correct. The incident should be coded as Incident Type 481, Attempt to burn. It is not a fire.

With NFIRS 5.0 there are much more codes to choose from than before. In the old reporting system, it would probably have been reported as either a structure fire or smoke scare. Now, we need to go through the codes more carefully to make sure there isn't one that better fits the situation, as was the case with this situation.

If you're ever in doubt as to how to code an incident feel free to contact: **Lori:** phone (402) 471-9472 or email [lori.loyd@sfm.ne.gov](mailto:lori.loyd@sfm.ne.gov) or **Cathy:** phone (402) 471-9479 or email [cathy.wann@sfm.ne.gov](mailto:cathy.wann@sfm.ne.gov).

## REPORTING REMINDERS

NOTE: References to fields and sections are by the names the USFA gave the objects. Some software vendors changed the names and/or locations. Hopefully you will still understand what I am referring to. If not, let me know.

- When dispatched to a controlled burn of agriculture land that got out of control, code section E of the Fire Module as follows: E1 is 2 Unintentional (several departments will code this as 1 Intentional – although the fire was intentionally set it was not done with malice or intent to defraud); E2 is 75

Agriculture or Land Management Burns; and E3 None.

- Incident numbers must be all numeric – no letters, dashes, etc. Those using the Federal Data Entry Tool will find that it allows you to do this, but doing so will cause problems down the road.
- Do NOT use codes that have (Conversion Only) after them. These codes are exclusively for converting NFIRS 4.1 data to the NFIRS 5.0 format. They are not valid codes to be used in completing a 5.0 incident report. Example: Incident Type 110 is a conversion only code. Use Incident Type 111 Structure Fire instead.
- The Incident Type for fires started by lightning should be coded in the 100 series. Code 814, Lightning Strike (No Fire) should only be used if there was no resultant fire from the lightning.
- If your department is canceled enroute to an incident and no one from the department arrives at the scene, the correct Incident Type code is 611 and Action Taken Code is 93. If someone did continue on to the scene to investigate, the Incident Type code should be in the 700 series and Action Taken 86. You cannot use Action Taken code 93 with the 700 series of Incident Type codes.

## WEB REPORTS

USFA has developed several reports utilizing the collected NFIRS data. Many of these reports can be found on our website, [www.sfm.ne.gov](http://www.sfm.ne.gov), click on Statistics – Fire. In order to run these reports for your department you must (1) be a registered user (if you are using the Federal Data Entry Tool to enter your reports you are a registered user), (2) have Adobe Acrobat Reader installed on your computer, (3) meet the requirements outlined on the web page in the next paragraph, and (4) have a basic understanding of computer programs and querying data.

Registered users may go to [www.nfirs.fema.gov/webtools/webreports](http://www.nfirs.fema.gov/webtools/webreports). Please read the information on this page to make sure you have all the necessary components to run the reports. If you meet the criteria, click on the Summary Output Reports

Tool Documentation link on the left. This documentation explains all the available reports, what data is included and what the parameters are to run the report. Follow the instructions to download the manual.

After downloading is complete, click on the Summary Output Reports Tool Login link on the left. Enter the username, state (NE) and password used to access the Data Entry Tool. NOTE: If you are not currently a registered user of the Federal Data Entry Tool, you must first go to [www.nfirs.fema.gov](http://www.nfirs.fema.gov), click on the User Section and then User Registration and create an account. Your username should be the fire department name (no spaces or special characters) or your FDID number. The password must be at least eight characters with at least one being a number. Once you have registered, I will need to activate your account and set the appropriate permissions BEFORE you can access the web reporting tool.

Once you have logged in, you will see a screen that lists all the reports. Click on the report you want to run. You will then have a screen appear where you need to enter the parameters for the report – date ranges, whether to include all reports or just valid or invalid reports; use only 4.1 reports, 5.0 reports or both; include all reports, only released reports or only unreleased reports (reports are released at least quarterly to allow USFA access to the data. You should always run your reports with this parameter set to All to be sure all reports that have been entered are included), etc. Click on the dot before Nebraska then the one before the county and place a check next to your department's name. You will only be able to run reports for your department.

The amount of time it takes to run a report will vary depending on the report and how many other users are running reports at the time. Some will run within minutes and others will take hours. When finished the report appears on the Completed Reports tab. You may want to run the report and then log out and come back later to retrieve the finished report instead of staying logged on until it finishes.

Once it appears on the Completed Reports tab, click on the report to open. You

can either look at the report online or save it to your hard drive by clicking on PDF/Printing if you want to save it for future use and/or print it off. On the next screen, click All and then click Save PDF. A window will appear asking if you want to Open, Save or Cancel. Click Save. The Save As window will then appear. Choose where you want to save the file. Change the filename to something more meaningful than the default report name. Click Save.

Click the X's on the right to close out of the screens and get back to the Reporting screen. From here you may run additional report or logout if you are finished.

## NEED HELP?

If you have questions or problems using the Federal Data Entry Tool or the Web-Reporting Tool, you should first contact me. I don't have hours to spend providing support, especially on the web reporting, as I have other work to do, but will do my best to help you.

If I am unavailable or unable to answer your questions, you may contact FEMA's Help Desk at 888-382-3827 or by email at [fema-nfirshhelp@dhs.gov](mailto:fema-nfirshhelp@dhs.gov). The Help Desk is available from 8:30 to 4:30 Eastern time, Monday through Friday.

## BEAT THE RUSH

The end of the year is fast approaching. Please start getting caught up on your reports or sending them in if you haven't yet – especially if you use the paper forms.

If you aren't sure whether your department has submitted any reports go to our website, [www.sfm.ne.gov](http://www.sfm.ne.gov), click on Statistics – Fire – Fire Department History. This report shows all departments who have submitted reports as of October 31, 2005.